

Exhibit A



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

Martina Vandenberg
The Human Trafficking Pro Bono Legal Center
1030 15th St. NW #104B
Washington, DC 20005

November 14, 2017

Case Control Number: F-2017-15417
Subject of Request: Simret Semere Tekle

Dear Ms. Vandenberg:

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act. As your request relates to visa matters, the Visa Office of the State Department has searched its records, located, and reviewed seven documents, totaling 13 pages, relevant to your request.

The Freedom of Information Act generally provides for public access to government records. It specifically exempts from disclosure, however, those records which are otherwise specifically protected from release by statute (5 U.S.C. §552(b)(3)). Section 222(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. §1202(f)), is such a statute. 8 U.S.C. §1202(f) provides in pertinent part that "records of the Department of State and of diplomatic and consular offices of the United States pertaining to the issuance or refusal of visas...shall be considered confidential..."

However, in accordance with the decision in *Medina-Hincapie v. Department of State, et.al.*, 700 F.2d 737 (DC Cir. 1983), we are permitted to release only those documents which were submitted or received by the applicant/requestor or others who have provided written authorizations for release of their documents. Thus, we are releasing to you one in part, as this document originated from or were sent to individuals who provided written authorizations and release would therefore not breach their confidentiality.

This decision may be appealed to the Appeals Officer of the Appeals Review Panel of the Department pursuant to Section 171.13 Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations. For your information, a copy of this regulation is enclosed.

The Department has now completed the processing of your request. If you have any questions you may write to the Office of Information Programs and Services, SA-2, Department of State, Washington DC 20522-8100, or contact the Office of Information Programs and Services by telephone at (202) 261-8484. Please be sure to refer to the case control number shown above in all correspondence about this case. Also, you may contact our FOIA Public Liaison via email at FOIAProgram-DL@state.gov or telephone at 202 663-2222 for any further assistance and to discuss any aspect of your request. Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

Sincerely,

ANTERON P HERBERT

Digitally signed by ANTERON P HERBERT
DN: cn=ANTERON P HERBERT, o=Department Of State,
ou=CA/VO/L/A, email=HerbertAP1@state.gov, c=US
Date: 2017.11.14 13:30:30 -0500

for
Matt McNeil, Acting Chief
Advisory Opinions Division
Directorate for Visa Services

Enclosure:
As stated